

# Clinton, Schumer, Lautenberg, Menendez, Maloney, Nadler, Fossella Announce Final Congressional Passage of \$108 Million to Expand Health Coverage for 9/11 Emergency Responders and Others

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Funding Comes as Thousands of Patients are Seeking Treatment for 9/11 Related Illnesses, with Numbers Rising

Funds to Expand Treatment to Residents, Office and Commercial Workers, Students, and Other Individuals

Washington, DC &ndash; Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton, Charles Schumer, Frank Lautenberg, and Robert Menendez, along with Representatives Carolyn Maloney, Jerrold Nadler, and Vito Fossella today announced final Congressional passage of an additional \$108 million in federal funding to address the mounting health needs of those individuals who were exposed to environmental hazards released as a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks upon the World Trade Center. The money builds on the \$50 million that was provided in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill that was signed into law earlier this year, bringing total funding for the year to \$158 million.

The latest funding increase was approved as part of the Fiscal Year 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill and includes \$51.5 million in the Fiscal Year 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS) Appropriations Bill and \$56.5 million in additional emergency spending. The omnibus bill, which includes 11 appropriations bills, will now be sent to the President for signature.

"As a nation we can accept nothing short of unwavering federal support for these ailing heroes of September 11th. Our brave responders who risked all to save others, and those residents and workers who immediately began rebuilding our shattered city, faced great adversity with calm determination six years ago. We must show the same resolve now in standing with them as they grapple with the lasting medical problems that are the legacy of that tragic day," Senator Clinton said. "I welcome this new funding as an important step that will sustain these programs while we work on a bipartisan, long-term solution in the Senate."

"It is high time that the first responders and residents of Lower Manhattan that were exposed to toxins six years ago receive the treatment they need and deserve. I am pleased that this essential funding for the men and women who are now suffering from the effects of the attacks has been approved, and promise to continue to fight for the full funding they need," said Senator Schumer.

"First responders, emergency workers and volunteers showed true courage during the recovery effort after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Now, many of these brave men and women are suffering serious illnesses from the toxins at Ground Zero. It's time we give these heroes the treatment they deserve," said Senator Lautenberg.

Senator Menendez said, "This is the type of federal commitment that puts the mantra 'We will never forget' into action, and it's the type of commitment that had been lacking in previous Congresses. With major investments in the health of those who inhaled the toxic air around Ground Zero, we can help address the needs of all those who deserve their government's attention and resources, whether they developed symptoms in the days after 9/11 or in the years after 9/11. Moving forward, we cannot rest until all of those who inhaled the toxic dust around Ground Zero are examined and those found to be sick are treated."

"This landmark bill would for the very first time ensure a full year's funding for federal 9/11 health clinics," said Congresswoman Maloney. "In addition, these funds will help provide care not only to 9/11 responders, but to lower Manhattan residents, workers and students, as well. The New York delegation worked hard to

make sure that in 2008, 9/11 health clinic doctors won't have to worry about keeping their doors open. I urge the President to support this funding and sign this important bill."

"This landmark funding is a tremendous step toward caring for those who — six years later — are still suffering as a result of the 9/11 attacks on our nation," said Congressman Nadler. "As Abraham Lincoln said, we must 'care for him who shall have borne the battle.' We must also continue fighting for comprehensive health benefits for all those who have become sick as a result of the collapse of the World Trade Center, whether they be first responders, local residents, office workers, or students. And we must ensure a full and proper clean-up of all affected areas, so that no more innocent people will be harmed by the environmental scars of 9/11."

"This funding will finally provide medical monitoring and treatment to all the unsung heroes of 9/11, including 9/11 responders, area workers, residents and others. It is also an important step forward in fulfilling our responsibility to help all those who are sick today as well as those who become ill in the future," said Congressman Vito Fossella.

The \$108 million in new funding will go towards monitoring and treatment activities administered by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to help those individuals who were exposed to the environmental hazards released on and after 9/11. The \$51.5 million portion in the Fiscal Year 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS) Appropriations Bill also includes statutory language requiring the Department of Health and Human Services, through NIOSH, to expand the program beyond responders and rescue workers to entities that would provide services to residents, office and commercial workers, students, and other individuals who were exposed. Existing programs to serve those who were impacted include the centers in the Mount Sinai Consortium and the program run by the New York City Fire Department.

The lawmakers said that the approved funding is a recognition of the importance of addressing the short and long-term health needs of those individuals who were exposed to the environmental hazards released as a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks upon the World Trade Center, and affirms the commitment of the federal government to provide assistance to those whose physical and mental health was adversely impacted as a result of this exposure. More than six years after the attacks, persistent health effects have been documented among rescue and recovery workers, such as asthma, chronic sinusitis, and gastrointestinal conditions. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and other health effects have also been diagnosed among those who have been exposed.

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